

## Lesson 39: Paul's Final Words to the Romans

### Romans 16:25-27

<sup>25</sup> Now

to Him

who is able to establish you

according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ,

according to the revelation of the mystery

which has been kept secret for long ages past,

<sup>26</sup> but now is manifested,

and has been made known

by the Scriptures of the prophets,

according to the commandment of the eternal God,

to all the nations,

*leading* to obedience of faith;

<sup>27</sup> to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

NASB

### Introduction

I love how Paul refers to the gospel as my gospel here at the end of the letter. It's like my team, my family, my city, my wife – my gospel. I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is my gospel. It is the truth about my Lord. It's ownership. It's identity. It's my gospel. Anyway, we will get back to that.

Here is how Paul began the letter to the Romans. This is his thesis.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH’ (Romans 1:16-17).”

So, how did Paul do in supporting the claims of his thesis in Romans?

He claimed that the gospel is the power of God for salvation. What power? The power of the cross which removes the penalty of sin; the power of the indwelling Spirit which enables us to overcome the sin principle in our flesh; the power to keep us secure in the protection of his grace, knowing that he will take us to glory. Who can separate us from the power of his love in Jesus Christ? The gospel is the power of God for salvation. I think Paul did a great job of laying out for us the power of God for salvation in the gospel.

Paul also claimed that this power of salvation is available “to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” He argued that Gentile and Jew both will be judged according to their works and both will come up short, “by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in his sight.” The problem of sin is universal, having been introduced to humanity through the disobedience of Adam. Therefore, God's solution for sin is universal, coming through the obedience of the second Adam, Jesus Christ. This gift of grace is totally inclusive to all who receive it by faith in Jesus. We got a glimpse of that inclusivity in the closing greetings to members of the church of Rome. Their names included men and women, Hebrew, Greek, Roman, slave, free and wealthy. The gospel is for everyone who believes.

Paul further claimed that the gospel has power and universality because in it God's righteousness is revealed. We saw Paul show us two sides to that claim. First, the gospel reveals that God himself is righteous. God cannot ignore the penalty of sin. By the cross he paid for sin, so that he might remain righteous when he forgives sin. Critics would say it is well and good to forgive sin, but this gospel makes God out to be unrighteous because it then allows people to go on living in sin. But we see that grace brings a new vision, a new motivation and a new power. Grace is not permission to sin. Grace is freedom from sin. God is righteous not only in forgiveness but also in producing a new people being restored into the image of Jesus Christ. Critics also fault God for being unfaithful in his promises to

Israel. But in this too, God is proved righteous. God has kept his promises, though his people have turned away from him. The doors have been open wide to Gentiles, but God has not rejected the Jew. God maintains a remnant of believing Israelites, and he has a plan for the future of Israel. The gospel reveals the righteousness of God in his faithfulness to all his promises.

The righteousness of God is about God. It is also about man. This is the other side of righteousness that Paul develops. Man receives the righteousness of God through the righteousness of Jesus. We are justified, declared righteous, by faith. It is not our own righteousness but the righteousness of God. And we are not only declared righteous. Grace gives us new vision, new motivation, new power to actually begin to live righteously. There is a righteousness that is our own that comes from participating with God in our sanctification. It is not perfect. It does not justify us. It is the first fruits of God's work in us. He is transforming us into the image of Jesus Christ. That work will be complete only in heaven. So, we have the righteousness of God as a declared status. And we are also beginning to live out the righteousness of God in community with one another.

This is Paul's declaration, and this is the argument he has made. The gospel is the power of God for salvation. That gospel is universally available to all who believe. And the gospel reveals the righteousness of God.

Paul has invited the Romans to believe in this gospel, to live out this gospel and to join him in the mission of the gospel. Paul expects the Romans to join him in spreading the gospel and building the gospel community. When we read the little phrases he uses to describe the people he greets in chapter 16, we hear this idea of participation together in the work of the gospel. They are in the harvest field together. It seems to me that he expects everyone to be a witness to the gospel in his or her own sphere of influence. Consider these phrases in his greetings to the men and women in the church.

Paul says of Phoebe she has been a helper of many. He says of Prisca and Aquila that they have risked their own necks for me. Mary has worked hard for you. Andronicus and Junia are outstanding among the apostles. Urbanus is a fellow worker. Tryphaena and Tryphosa are workers in the Lord. Persis has worked hard in the Lord. There is this working together to build something. There is a commitment to the kingdom of Christ which is focused on contributing to the local community of believers. To not be ashamed of the gospel means that we gladly proclaim that gospel to other people in society as the power of God for salvation. To not be ashamed of the gospel means that the gospel of Jesus is our primary focus, our primary mission of the church. We proclaim the gospel, and we invite people to believe in the gospel, and we build up one another in the knowledge of the gospel. This is what Paul has been doing for us in the letter to the Romans. He has been proclaiming to us the gospel, he has been inviting us to believe in and live by the gospel, he has been building us up, giving this foundation of deeper knowledge about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And now we have come to the end. And since Paul ends very similar to how he began, we are going to a moment to look at his rhetorical structure because that is going to help us to better understand the benediction that we have in the last three verses. So, after we consider this big picture structure, we are going to look closely at that benediction to close up our study of Romans.

### **The Rhetorical Structure of Romans**

The oldest manuscript copies of the letter to the Romans contain the full 16 chapters that we have in our modern Bibles. There are some manuscripts, old, but not the oldest, that move the final benediction from the end of chapter 16 and put it in between chapter 14 and 15. So, they still have everything. There is just that one little change. Then there are some later Latin manuscripts that drop off chapter 15 and 16 altogether. Since the oldest manuscripts contain the full text in our current order, we should assume that some later manuscripts made some adjustment for some reason that we don't any longer know about. For example, it is possible that a copy of Romans was shared with churches outside of Rome without the last two chapters because somebody thought, "Well, that speaks primarily to the Romans." And they cut out those two chapters. Or perhaps Origen is right. He

blames the heretic Marcion for leaving out the last two chapters because Marcion was anti-Jewish, and Paul talks positively about going to Jerusalem and bringing together Jew and Gentile. (For various options see Moo, 5-9.)

Anyway, we have the testimony of the oldest manuscript copies. They agree with us that we have all 16 chapters. It also makes sense to recognize our current 16 chapters as original because it creates a well-balanced structure. Paul has, in fact, created a chiasmic balance to the letter with his use of Greek rhetorical style. Remember our previous references to Greek rhetoric. We have *logos* as the message or the topic, *pathos* which creates heart connection, and *ethos* which establishes credibility.

So, the greetings at the beginning and the end of the letter are the first frame of our chiasm. That is 1:1-7 at the beginning and chapter 16 at the end. In both places Paul talks about the people, who the letter is to and who it is from. And in both places he refers to the *logos* of the letter or the big picture topic which is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The second frame is prayer. And that is a standard element of a Greek letter introduction. So, we have Paul's statement in 1:8-10 that he has been praying for the Romans. That was right after the introductory greeting. Then, before the concluding greeting, we have Paul asking the Romans to pray for him when he goes to Jerusalem. That is in 15:30-33. So, we have greeting on either end with *logos*. Then we have prayer as the inner frame.

The third frame of the chiasm has Paul using *pathos* and *ethos* to create a gospel-centered connection with the Romans. And we discussed this two lessons ago when we went over the beginning of our conclusion in 15:14-29. That is where we see this *pathos* and *ethos* in the conclusion. And we identified close parallels between that section and the *pathos* and *ethos* employed by Paul at the end of the introduction in 1:11-17.

So, we have People and *Logos* in the outside frame, then prayer in the second internal frame, then *pathos* and *ethos* in the third internal frame, and then the development of *logos* in the middle or body of the letter. That's the biggest portion of the letter from 1:18-15:13.

1:1-17 Introduction	1. 1:1-7 Greeting (People and <i>Logos</i> )
	2. 1:8-10 Prayer
	3. 1:11-17 Gospel connection ( <i>Pathos</i> and <i>Ethos</i> )
1:18-11:36 Body of the letter	X. 1:18-15:13 Development of the thesis ( <i>Logos</i> )
	3' 15:14-29 Gospel connection ( <i>Pathos</i> and <i>Ethos</i> )
	2' 15:30-33 Prayer
15:14-16:27 Conclusion	1' 16:1-27 Greeting (People and <i>Logos</i> )

The big picture topic is the gospel. And the body of the letter develops that topic. It is a big theme. There is a lot you could say about the gospel. And Paul is not going to write a fifth gospel. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John have that covered. So, Paul is not going to focus on the "who" of Jesus or the narrative of the cross. Paul focuses on the "how" of the gospel. How is this gospel God's power for salvation? How does that work? And how does this gospel reveal God's righteousness? And how do we live out this gospel. Those are the questions that Paul has addressed through Romans.

So, now we are ready to look at Paul's last three verses. It is loaded. In this one sentence, he is going to refer to his purpose, his topic, his antecedent, his scope and his goal. It's all one sentence.

So, let's read the text. This is Romans 16:25-27. And then we will address each of these big picture elements.

**[Read Romans 16:25-27]**

## Paul's Benediction (16:25-27)

So, these three verses are one of those long sentences Paul likes to write. And as with all of Paul's long sentences the best thing to do is to first identify the subject and verb. The sentence is a benediction, and so, it has kind of a strange form. The main subject and verb do not come until the last few words, and at least in the English, the order is odd. We could shorten the whole benediction just down to this, "Now to God be the glory. Amen" To see the subject and verb clearly we have to turn that sentence around, so that what we have is, "Glory be to God!" So, "Glory" is the subject, "be" is the verb and "to God" is a prepositional phrase. That's our main sentence.

That was probably more complicated than it needs to be. The main thing to recognize is that Paul starts the benediction in verse 25, "Now to him..." and then he is going to say everything he wants to say, and he is going to end in verse 27, "...to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen." So, we can separate out that beginning phrase in verse 25, "Now to him..." and the ending portion in verse 27 that starts with "to the only wise God...". That's our benediction. In the middle, Paul is going to wrap-up or restate five big picture elements that he stated way back in the introduction. These are the purpose, topic, antecedent, scope and goal.

First, we get the purpose.

### 1. Purpose: 16:25 and 1:11

The phrase "to establish you" or as your translation may have it, "to strengthen you," appears only two places in Romans, 1:11 and here in 16:25. Paul said in the introduction that this is why he longed to come to Rome, "that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, and that you may be established." I have said in other place that the letter to the Romans has multiply purposes, an apologetic purpose, a missional purpose and a pastoral purpose. I also said that I think the pastoral purpose is primary.

And there are three reasons that I believe the pastoral purpose is primary.

This phrase is the first reason I believe Paul is writing primarily as a pastor. That in the introduction and in the end, he wants to know that he has been writing in order to strengthen or establish the listeners in the gospel of Jesus Christ. That has been the main agenda all along. It is the main agenda of the letter, so it has also been the main agenda of our series, that we would be established more firmly in our understanding of the gospel. The second reason I believe Paul's purpose is primarily pastoral is the amount of time that Paul spends developing the gospel in the body of the letter, through both doctrine and application. That focus suggests to me that he is not primarily introducing himself to the Romans, he could have done that in a much shorter letter, or primarily inviting them to join in the mission. He could have done that in a much shorter letter. He is going for life change. He does not want to wait until he visits Rome to establish the Romans in the gospel. He has begun with this letter. The third reason I believe his purpose is primarily pastoral comes from the answers he gives to the questions he raises. Paul uses an apologetic style by employing a sceptic to raise objections throughout the letter. And one reason to have such a long letter would be to give an apologetic or a defense of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And while Paul does succeed in defending God and the righteousness of God in his thorough explanation of the gospel, his answers are not written

## Introduction 1:1-7, 11

<sup>1</sup>Paul, a bond-servant of Christ

**2** Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

<sup>2</sup>which He promised beforehand

**3** through His prophets in the holy Scriptures. <sup>3</sup>concerning His

Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, <sup>4</sup>who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord, <sup>5</sup>through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the

**5** obedience of faith

**4** among all the Gentiles for His name's sake, <sup>6</sup>among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ; <sup>7</sup>to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>11</sup>For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that

**1** you may be established;

## Conclusion 16:25-27

<sup>25</sup>Now to Him who is able

**1** to establish you according to

**2** my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, <sup>26</sup>but now is manifested, and

**3** by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God,

**4** has been made known to all the nations, leading to

**5** obedience of faith. <sup>27</sup>to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

to convince a non-believing sceptic. He assumes that his audience is on his side. His answers are a call the listener to believe and respond to the truth of the gospel. And that is more the work of a pastor than an apologist. Paul's message provides a defense of the gospel, and it calls the Romans to the mission of the gospel, but it does it by establishing the Romans in the truth and practice of the gospel. If he can do the pastoral purpose, and he can get these believers solidly grounded in the gospel, that's going to be their best defense, and that's going wake their hearts up or connect them to the mission. So, Paul's primary purpose is pastoral, to establish the Romans in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul's next phrase states Paul's big picture topic, that is, the gospel of Jesus.

## *2. Topic: 16:25 and 1:1*

This is how Paul plans to establish the Romans. He writes that God will, "establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery." These are all the same thing: the gospel, the preaching of Jesus Christ, the mystery. Paul first introduces this topic in the very first verse of the letter when he says that he has been set apart for the gospel of God. And then he goes on in 1:3 to explain that gospel, as concerning Jesus, both the son of David and the son of God.

Here in the conclusion Paul uses three words in quick succession that have been important throughout Romans in connection with the gospel. They are reveal, manifest, and make known. And we can add to those three two additional, similar words used by Paul, one can be translated to make evident and the other to demonstrate, so that we have these five words: to reveal, to manifest, to make known, to make evident, and to demonstrate. And they are all words used to describe God's work to reveal his truth to man. Remember in chapter 1 Paul wrote that in the gospel "the righteousness of God is revealed." He also wrote, "the wrath of God is being revealed" and what can be known about God is evident because God "made it evident." Then in chapter 3 Paul wrote that "the righteousness of God has been manifested," and God "demonstrates his righteousness at the present time." Then in chapter 9 he wrote that "God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? And *He did so to make known* the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy." And then now in our present text in chapter 16, we have God has revealed the mystery which "now is manifested and has been made known."

Paul calls the gospel my gospel. I said I would come back to that. He owns it. He embraces it. He has no shame in it. He boasts about it. At the same time, Paul makes abundantly clear that when he says, "my gospel," he does not at all mean that he came up with it. The gospel is not Paul's theology. The gospel message does not originate with Paul. The gospel message originated in the trinity, in the mind of God the Father, the Son, the Spirit, before the creation of the world. This gospel is God's idea, God's plan, and God's execution of that plan. This gospel is God's truth for humanity, revealed, manifested, made known, not by Paul, by God. God used Paul as an instrument through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, along with other apostles and prophets to reveal to us the mind of God, the truth of God.

And the revelation of this gospel didn't begin with Jesus Christ, when he came and with his followers who taught us about it but began long before. There is an antecedent. And that brings us to our third big picture idea.

## *3. Antecedent: 16:26 and 1:2*

Paul writes in 16:26 that the mystery "has been made known by the Scriptures of the prophets." And we might take this to refer to the apostles and prophets who have given us the New Testament Scriptures which explain the mystery of the gospel of Jesus Christ. That is a possible interpretation. But I think Paul is connecting us back to the earlier point he made more than once. The mystery may not have been fully revealed before Jesus came, but it was previously witnessed to by the Law and the Prophets. Paul wrote back in 1:2 that the gospel of God was "promised beforehand through His

prophets in the holy Scriptures.” And then in 3:21 he wrote that God’s righteousness has been “witnessed by the Law and the Prophets.”

Not only does Paul show that the gospel comes from God, he also shows that it is not a completely new idea foreign to the Old Testament Scriptures. There is radical newness in the gospel. It is the new wine skin that cannot be structured and lived out in the same way as the old wine skin. But even with all of its newness, the gospel is deeply rooted in the doctrine of the Torah and the doctrine of the Prophets. Perhaps because the gospel of grace includes such radical newness, Paul recognizes the importance of making it very clear to us how strongly the gospel is connected to Old Testament teaching.

Paul does not just make the claim that the gospel is witnessed by the Old Testament. He shows us. So, there are places where Paul alludes to ideas in the Old Testament, such as the idolatry mentioned in 1:22-23 or circumcision of the heart mentioned in 2:29. It is hard to count up all the potential allusions or connections that Paul makes with the Old Testament narrative, with Old Testament world view. That is Paul’s world view, so it is connecting to the Old Testament all the time. But in Romans Paul does not just leave us only with allusions to the Old Testament. He goes directly to the source. He cites roughly 60 passages from the Old Testament. Isaiah and the Psalms are his favorites, so they get multiple citations, but he also quotes in Romans from Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, 1 Kings, Proverbs, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Nahum, Habakkuk and Malachi. We cannot miss that Paul believes that the New is deeply rooted in the Old.

It is possible to make one of two mistakes with the New Covenant. We could see it as an updated version of the Old. And we could seek to create a new Christian law with a religious structure parallel to the Old. But when we do that, we miss the discontinuity. The Old Covenant was weakened as a system by the sinfulness of human beings. Part of the whole point of the experiment with Israel was that it did not work. It could not bring about righteousness that is pleasing to God. In Jesus God instituted something new. Rather than a law outside of us working to form our behavior, the Spirit is working in us to transform our hearts.

Now, the other mistake would be to jettison the Old Covenant now that we have the New. Paul certainly does not give up the Old Testament. His 60 citations in Romans make it very clear that he values highly the Old Testament as useful to Christians for teaching about doctrine and about practice. Our challenge is to make sure we receive that teaching in a way that fits with the new realities of the New Covenant.

Jesus Christ does not abolish the Law and the Prophets, he fulfills them. Avoiding these two errors is not easy, the error of seeing only continuity between the Old and New Covenants or the opposite error of seeing only discontinuity between the Old and New Covenants. It is not easy to avoid those errors or to see how best to fit the Old and the New. Studying Romans is been a great place to start. We get a lot of help from Paul in this, and how we are supposed to understand the Old Covenant law, and what is different between the Old Covenant and now what we have in the New Covenant of grace. We also need to seek to know the Old Testament like Paul did. For that reason, I will go ahead and tell you the next series that I am going to teach after I wrap up with Romans today is going to be an overview of the first five books of the Bible called Grace in the Law. I believe that better understanding of the Old Covenant helps us to better understand what we have in the New Covenant.

Okay, so, we have considered the big picture purpose, topic and antecedent. Paul also states his scope.

#### *4. Scope: 16:26 and 1:6*

In 16:26, Paul says that the gospel “has been made known to all the nations.” It is not clear to me what Paul means by saying this in the past tense that the gospel “has been made know to all the nations.” What is clear is that Paul is not done preaching the gospel to the nations. He does not believe the task is complete. His big desire is to go to Spain. He’s got more to do. Another thing that is also clear is that Paul’s scope is all nations, not some nations, not select nations, but all of the

nations. This fits with 1:6 where he writes that he has received grace to bring about “the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles.”

And early on in the letter, that reference to all Gentiles might lead us to think that Paul does not see the gospel as God’s plan of salvation for the Jew or that Paul does not see the Jews as within his particular scope. But once we get to the thesis in 1:16 we see really quickly that Paul understands the gospel of Jesus as first for the Jews and then also for Gentiles. Paul has a special calling to Gentiles, but he sees the scope of gospel proclamation to all nations.

That phrase “obedience of faith” brings us to our fifth and last big picture element.

*5. Goal: 16:26 and 1:5*

This is Paul’s goal. It is closely related to his purpose. And like the phrase “to establish you,” the phrase “obedience of faith” appears only twice in Romans, just here in the conclusion and then it was in the beginning in the introduction. And limiting the use of these phrases “to establish you” and “obedience of faith” to the beginning and end, highlights them for us. These are significant phrases for Paul’s big picture.

I taught a long time ago in one of the introductory lessons that obedience of faith can mean two things. Faith could be the act of obedience. That would mean that Paul’s goal is to bring about the reception of the gospel among the Gentiles. Their obedience would be the act of faith, kneeling before Jesus as the king, receiving him as Lord and savior. The phrase can also mean the obedience that flows out of true faith. I prefer not to make a choice between the two. And the issue of human righteousness is similar. Chapter 1-4 teaches us that we receive righteousness by faith. We cannot do the righteousness required by the first question of covenant to become acceptable in the eyes of God. We must receive the status of righteousness by grace through faith. All we can do is believe.

But then, chapters 5-8 emphasize that, having received a status of righteousness by grace through faith, we are united with Jesus Christ. And because of that, his Spirit indwells us, and we are now able to begin doing the righteous acts that are pleasing in the eyes God. And we do not do them to answer the first question of covenant, “What makes me acceptable?”, rather, to answer the second question, “How then shall I live?”

So, if we interpret obedience of faith as our act of faith when confronted with the gospel, then the phrase goes with chapters 1-4 and the first question of covenant. If we understand obedience of faith to mean the obedience that comes from faith, then the idea fits chapters 5-8 and the second question of covenant. So, I like both ideas. And I do not see a need to really choose between the two.

### **Sum up**

Let’s sum up what we have here in these three verses and so also sum up our study of Romans. Paul’s purpose is to establish us. And the topic or means by which he will do that is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul has owned this gospel in his mind and in his heart. He can say, “It is my gospel.” But Paul is not the source. This is not Paul’s theology. God thought of this good news before the foundation of the world, he brought it about by becoming man, dying and rising again, and he has communicated it to us in the writings of the Apostles. This gospel is rooted in the soil of Old Testament narrative and teaching. The scope of the message is all nations, every people, every tribe, every language. And the goal of this message is to bring about among all peoples the obedience of faith and the transformation of faith that leads to further obedience.

It has been my pleasure interpreting Romans with you over these 39 lessons. I know that I have personally been established more deeply in the gospel of Jesus Christ by going through Romans again. And I hope that that is your experience as well, that you are established deeply in him, that you see the grace of God and the love of Jesus and that you are motivated by the Spirit working in you to live for him, that you feel completely secure in relationship with God because you know it is not what you do that makes you acceptable to God. It is who you are as his creation and who you are in Jesus Christ. You are completely righteous, completely loved. God’s desire is for you to be able to

live life as a true man and a true woman, a true son, a true daughter of the king, to live life as life was meant to be lived in union with Jesus Christ and in obedience to our glorious Father in heaven. I pray that is true of you. It is working in you. That you can say with Paul, this is my gospel. And I am not ashamed.

I hope you will join me as we begin to interpret the Pentateuch. Or give an overview to equip you to be able to interpret the Pentateuch, and especially with a focus on seeing grace in the law. That is where we are going next with Observe the Word. Now, I would like to end in the same way that Paul ended.

So, let's end with his benediction.

Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past, but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, *leading* to obedience of faith; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.

### Reflection Questions

1. What stands out to you as important, confusing, interesting or strange in Romans 16:25-27?
2. How has your study of Romans "established you in the gospel"? What are two or three truths that have "stuck" with you, helping to formulate your thinking about the gospel?
3. How has your study of Romans lead to your own "obedience of faith"? How has your life changed or what are actions you feel lead to take based on Paul's exhortations to present yourself as a living sacrifice? Have you committed to any specific behavior, to start doing something or stop doing something as a result of your study?
4. When you say with Paul, "I am not ashamed of the gospel!" and when you think of the gospel like Paul as "my gospel" what one or two truths connected to the gospel would you most like to share with someone else? What truth that excites you or encourages you or comforts you or strengthens you would you like to pass on?